



# *NEWS RELEASE*

## **PRESS OFFICE**

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## **Allen-Edmonds to be Inducted into National SBA Hall of Fame**

**PORT WASHINGTON** – Allen-Edmonds Shoe Corporation will be inducted into the U.S. Small Business Administration Golden Anniversary Hall of Fame. A component of the SBA’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, Allen-Edmonds is part of an exclusive group of 23 American companies that will be publicly recognized by SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto during the closing ceremony of the National Entrepreneurial Conference and EXPO in Washington, DC at 8:00 p.m. on Friday, September 19.

In addition to having received SBA assistance at some point, each nominated business was required to meet the following criteria: exemplary leadership in the business community, outstanding innovation, sustained growth, creating jobs and opportunities for others in their community, great diligence to overcome significant hardships to achieve success and outstanding dedication to their community.

“At the heart of our longevity and success is our commitment to providing our customers with the highest quality products and service,” said John Stollenwerk, president and CEO of Allen-Edmonds Shoe Corporation. “In addition to those core values, we believe part of delivering the best service means giving back to our community and working even harder when we face big obstacles.”

A privately-owned enterprise, Allen-Edmonds worked closely with the Wisconsin SBA between the years 1979-1989 to leverage loans that dramatically helped the business grow. What began as a small Wisconsin company in 1922 is now a globally-coveted brand with a strong presence in the showrooms of elite retailers in thirty-three countries. Allen-Edmonds is still headquartered in Wisconsin and, today, includes 750 co-workers, four U.S. manufacturing facilities and twenty-seven company-owned retail stores.

“What most people don’t know is that all of these businesses started out small and received help from the SBA. Their success was the result of hard work and an unwavering commitment to excellence,” said SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto, “and the SBA is proud to have played a small part in the pursuit of their dreams.”

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Allen-Edmonds manufactures and markets fine men's footwear, accessories and cedar products using the philosophy of *quality, service* and *integrity*. Taking shoe making to the level of an art form, each pair of Allen-Edmonds shoes is painstakingly crafted by hand, in a process that includes over 200 separate production steps. Allen-Edmonds shoes are available all over the world and on the Internet. For more information, please visit the Allen-Edmonds website at [www.allenedmonds.com](http://www.allenedmonds.com).

*For more information about all of the SBA's programs for small businesses, call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800-U-ASK-SBA or TDD 704-344-6640. Also, visit the SBA's extensive Web site at [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov). The SBA, in co-sponsorship with Staples, has introduced an online newsletter **SBA Solutions**. For a free subscription, go to <http://web.sba.gov/list> and select New **SBA Solutions Newsletter**.*

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